

START OR ENHANCE A NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY PROGRAM



City of St. Louis Sustainability



DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood safety programs such as Block Captain Programs, National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch Organizations, and the popular Neighborhood Ownership Model can establish a system for residents to work together with Metro Police and with the Neighborhood Stabilization office to reduce crime and make residents safer. The Neighborhood Ownership Model establishes a way for residents to work with police officers, prosecutors, and judges to reduce crime. These kinds of programs, when well organized, have been shown to have a major positive impact on the safety and security of neighborhoods in St. Louis.

NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFITS

Environmental

- Reduced crime and crime related activities to help clean up streets and vacant lots and buildings
- Increased safety so people are more inclined to walk and bike rather than drive for short trips, which encourages sustainability, healthy lifestyles, and more inexpensive infrastructure

Social

- Collaborative community effort for increased safety fosters neighborhood ownership and responsibility
- Improved sense of place and personal investment in community
- Improved perception of neighborhood safety and security
- Meeting and learning from your neighbors

Economic

- Reduced crime for improved property values
- Reduced crime for improved chances for neighborhood reinvestment
- Safer and more productive local businesses



RELATED TOOLS

When paired with other tools, creating a neighborhood safety program can contribute to a greater and more sustainable neighborhood. Think about community cohesion and vibrant communities. Try combining these various strategies with:

- **Secure Vacant Buildings**
- **Preserve Existing Buildings**
- **Organize a Walking Group or Community Fitness Program**
- **Clean the Streets & Beautify the Streetscape**

EXAMPLES

FPSE Block Captain Program and Neighborhood Ownership Model, St. Louis, MO

The Forest Park Southeast neighborhood has seen significant improvements.

Lafayette Square Neighborhood Ownership Model, St. Louis, MO

Pioneered the NOM in 2010.

Bevo Neighborhood Watch, St. Louis, MO

Trains citizens on proper patrol behavior and maintains citizen participation.



GET STARTED

- 1. Research & Contact** There are numerous resources available to you for starting your neighborhood safety organization. The **Neighborhood Ownership Model** has proven successful throughout the City. It is a citizen-led partnership between police, prosecutors, and neighborhood volunteers to reduce crime. Each neighborhood tailors the plan to fit their unique circumstances and needs. It has three general categories:
 - Citizens-based solutions including citizen's patrols, neighborhood safety boards, and neighborhood planning teams.
 - Government partnerships including Neighborhood Orders of Protection, dedicated neighborhood liaison officers, and victim impact statements.
 - Technology-based solutions including cameras, crime alert emails, and phone chains.

Mike Petetit of Lafayette Square has guided many neighborhoods through the process of starting the Neighborhood Ownership Model including places like **Forest Park Southeast**, **Dutchtown**, **the Ville and Greater Ville**, and **Shaw**. If you're interested in learning more about the Neighborhood Ownership Model or to request a comprehensive copy, call the Circuit Attorney's Office at 314-622-4941. More information can be found [here](#).

The St. Louis **Neighborhood Stabilization Office** is also a good resource for citizens to work with the City and their Neighborhood Stabilization Officer to address physical and behavioral neighborhood issues.

- 2. Choose the Best Scale** Depending on your neighborhood, it may be best to start at the smaller scale of the block to address safety and community issues. The Block Captain Program is a way to get started. An NSO Team publication says, 'Block units create the foundation for a stronger, safer, and more vital neighborhood.' A good summary of duties and responsibilities can be found at the **FPSE** website. You can also reference the **FPSE Block Captain Handbook** and talk to your Neighborhood Association and your **NSO**. This handbook on **How to Organize Your Block** is a good starting point.
- 3. Create a Group** A **Neighborhood Citizens on Patrol Program** is another effective tool for improving safety in your neighborhood. Neighborhood groups will assign neighbors to organized units to patrol streets. These members are trained by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department to identify problems and engage law enforcement to intervene when they believe a crime is occurring. To set up training, you can contact Sergeant Catherine Dennis at the SLMPD by calling 314-444-5638.
- 4. Host an Event** **National Night Out** is also a positive way to improve safety, reduce crime, and get to know your neighbors. Each year, this unique crime/drug prevention event is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch. These block parties are also often sponsored by the City NSO. Visit the website to get more information and register your neighborhood.



Neighborhood safety meeting, Old North St. Louis

RELATED SUSTAINABILITY PLAN CATEGORIES

This tool supports the following goals and strategies:

Urban Character, Vitality & Ecology

Strategies G5-Promote neighborhood stabilization efforts.

Empowerment, Diversity & Equity

Strategies: F3-Ensure all neighborhoods are safe and perceived to be safe.

Health, Well-being & Safety

Strategies: A1-Establish a community security structure; A2-Create opportunities for positive dialogue between police officers and the local community